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A LOST ADDRESS By FRANK H. SWEET

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"Well, that is too bad!"

She was sitting on the floor of one of the rooms of a Fifth avenue hotel, nux outly examining the contents of a small value, which were presently scattered in semicircle before her. That the search was unsuccessful was apparent from the gathering frown on her face. At length she thrust the

Several minutes of silent consterna-

"Sure, this is one on you, Miss Flighty Head," she cried, merrily. "Would not Reggie laugh if he knew. But he shall not find out. No, indeed!" with a grimace. "He would never let me hear the last of it. But what shall I do? Three thousand miles from home, with only five pounds in my purse, and not the remotest idea in what part of this hurry scurry New York Reggie is to be found. Well, nii desperandum, as papa says. A Fitz-gerald never gets to his wits' ends.

guns and dogs before this, and it will take at least six weeks to hear from him. I have often read letters to the servants from their people in America, and they always go to an intelligence office. I will go to one myself."

On this very day it happened that Mrs. Van Maurice was unexpectedly deprived of her housekeeper. She was in the midst of a round of engagements and social duties, and as she prided herself on the unobtrusive machinery of her household, this defection filled her with momentary consternation. But she was a woman of resource, and a quick mental calculation convinced her that she could spare a brief half hour from her calls. This she utilized in a visit to an intelligence office.

A young lady was talking with the

clerk when she entered. Several women were sitting or standing about the room in various attitudes of hope or despondency. Mrs. Van Maurice gave them one comprehensive glance, and then turned to the clerk and waited for him to be at leisure. It was not an ordinary servant she wanted now, but one who was competent to take charge of her complicated household.

She was a liberal patron of the office, and presently the clerk excused himself to the young lady and came

"What can I do for you, Mrs. Van Maurice?" he asked.

She told him briefly.

"Why, really! I am not sure but this person will suit you. She has been speaking about just such a place." "Ah!" Mrs. Van Maurice looked at

the young lady more closely. She was undeniably prepossessing, and she had the very air that was the delight of Mrs. Van Maurice's fastidious soul. She was young, of course, but her eyes were so clear and self-possessed, and -well, Mrs. Van Maurice did much of the hall door. her business on impulse.

After they had entered the carriage she suddenly turned to her companion with the air of one conscious of having omitted something. "I believe I forgot to ask your

"It is Geraldine-Esther Geraldine."

"Ah! a very pretty name. And you said that you had had experience in managing a large establishment-looking after servants and table decorations and kitchen purchases, andand all that? May I ask where you

The girl hesitated a little, then looked at her companion frankly. "At home. I have been my father's housekeeper nearly four years. Re-

"Ab!" Mrs. Van Maurice possessed an extensive vocabulary in her "ah's," and the modulation of this one inti- brother's friend?" mated that her questioning was at an end. And, indeed, she believed that she understood the whole situationgood family-death-involved estate -supposed heiress seeking employment. That was all; and it was so simple that she immediately dismissed the matter from her mind.

The new housekeeper showed marvelous aptitude for her situation, though there were some few details which it seemed almost impossible for her to grasp. For instance, when she came in from the street she invariably ran lightly up the broad marble steps, and only recollected herself as she reached out toward the button. Then she would make a wry grimnce and alip back to the little gate which led around to the servants' entrance. Again, she found it

impossible to go past the doors of the drawing-room and library without an almost irresistible impulse to enter. One morning she was in the musle-

Van Maurice, she went on quietly with her work. "I beg your pardon. I didn't know

Aunt Lira had company," said an ing her class the mysteries of gram-

ward him quietly. It was a very -Kansas City Journal.

handsome, athletle young can she taw: and as their eyes met, a puzzled expression of awning recognition appeared on each face.

"Thank you. But - excuse mehaven't I seen you somewhere?"

"Why, on board the Aurora, of course!" stepping forward suddenly with outstretched hands. "You are the man who sprang overboard in a gale to rescue a poor emigrant's child, and who nearly lost his life in the attempt. It was the bravest thing I ever saw, and I have often wished I could thank you. The woman belonged to my own town."

"Oh, come, come; you make too much of my share in the matter," be expostulated. But, nevertheless, he took the outstretched hands and felt a strange thrill as he gazed into the upturned, glowing face. Then, eager-"You are the young lady who played the plane so exquisitely on the boat, and to whom all the passengers wanted to be introduced. I went to everybody I knew, but not one of them could claim the honor of your acquaintance."

"Why, that was too bad," commiseratingly.

"Indeed it was, I-" But she had

suddenly recollected herself.
"I am very sorry," she said, quietly. but I forgot myself for the moment am only the housekeeper here."

"No, really?" But she recognized with a pleasure which surprised her that there was more of incredulity than consternation in his voice.

"Yes-but here comes your auni, now. Good-morning."

The next day the young man called gain, and again in the evening. And the next day and the next, and after that two or three times each week. And for reward he saw Esther several times in the distance, and once actually spoke to her as she passed through the hall.

"Why don't you bring your friend with you occasionally, Harold?" asked Mrs. Van Maurice, one morning. "He must be a remarkable young Your mother was telling me about him the other day."

"He is a remarkable young man," answered Harold, warmly. "Just now he is absorbed in a new invention, and can hardly be dragged away from it. But perhaps I can bring him out to-morrow."

The next evening they were all gathered in Mrs. Van Maurice's cozy music room. During the conversation the hostess occasionally regarded her guest with a puzzled, inquiring expression. She had never seen him before, but, somehow, his features seemed familiar; and that peculiar way he had of throwing back his head why, she had seen it dozens of times. Suddenly a mirthful gleam of recognition swept the shadows from her face, and she rose quickly-with her a thought was to act.

"You say that your sister should have crossed the ocean before this, Mr. Fitzgerald," she said, "and that you have not heard from her. Do you resemble each other?"

"People used to say so. I believe; but Elsie appropriated all the beauty which rightfully ought to have been divided between us."

"Those attributes naturally go to the sisters," said Mrs. Van Maurice, smilingly. "But would you mind going downstairs with me a moment. I have something to show you."

As they left the room, Mr. Van Maurice rose with the remark that he would go into the library after the chessmen. Hardly had he disappeared when Harold heard a slight rustle at

"Is Mrs. Van Maurice here?"

"Esther!" Harold's face was in a glow as he stepped toward her. "No. don't go," as she drew back; "I want to speak to you, dear. I have been coming here for weeks, and have only just been able to catch glimpses of you as you flitted through some distant door. I cannot endure-"

"Why, what absurdity," she interrupted, her face flushing. "We do not even know each other's names." He looked blank, but only for a mo-

ment. Something even in her railing gave him courage, "What of it?" he asked, holdly

"Names don't signify. We know each other. And, besides, the names can be easily remedied. I am Harold Allyn ently I-I had occasion to come to Feners, at your service."

"What?" the glow fading from her face, and then coming back in a quick flood of eager questioning. "Not my

It was his turn to look surprised. "Your brother? I don't understand,"

"Reginald Fitzgerald. He is my brother." "O-h!" There were sudden footsteps, then;

"Here you are, Esther. We have been looking for you everywhere. I wish to introduce you to my friend, Mr. Fitzgerald." An hour fater Reginald and his sister

were standing in the hall, waiting for the carriage that was to take them "It has come out all right, Essie,"

he said, a little soberly; "so perhaps it will be as well to say no more about But why did you not look in a city

Her hands went up with a quick gesture of dismay.

"Reggie, I never once thought of it." Harold remained half an hour longer. When he left, his nunt followed him to the door.

"By the way, Harold," she said, as room arranging some folios on a she reached up to brush a stray fleck table when she heard quick approaching footsteps. Thinking it was Mrs. me to congratulate you."

A Marysville schoolma'am was teachenger, almost boylah voice. A serv-ant told me she was up here." mar. "Now. Johnnie," said she, "in what tense do I speak when I say: 'I am "Mrs. Van Maurice just went into the library," and Esther turned to-swered, quick as a wink: "The past."

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true in my case and I do not hesitate

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New York, Nov. 10, 1901.

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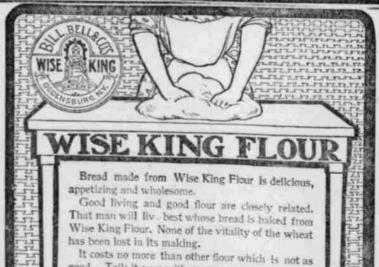
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